COMMANDERS DIGEST

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DOD Orders 25 Percent Cut in Overseas Travel

CHANGE AT THE TOP—Robert S. McNamara, 51, who resigned as Secretary of Defense Feb. 28 to assume the presidency of the World Bank, converses with the new Secretary of Defense, Clark M. Clifford, 61, at a Pentagon meeting.

A 25 percent reduction in official overseas travel for members of the defense establishment has been ordered by the Department of Defense in a further effort to alleviate the U.S. balance of payments problem.

The reduction, which covers the latter half of fiscal year 1968 and all of FY69, followed closely on the heels of a Presidential directive ordering the heads of federal departments and agencies to reduce U.S. official travel overseas "to the minimum consistent with the orderly conduct of the government's business abroad."

Aimed primarily at reducing non-essential travel to international conferences and other large scale meetings abroad, DOD Directive 5000.15 states that a "maximum effort will be made by each DOD component within its sphere of influence and/or jurisdiction to:

- Reduce the number of such conferences attended;
- Hold attendance to a minimum and use U.S. military personnel located at or near conference sites to the extent possible;
- And, schedule conferences, where possible, in the U.S. or countries in which excess foreign currencies on hand can be used."

Excluded under the DOD directive is travel necessary for permanent change of station, home leave, reenlistment leave, emergency travel, and medical, rest and recuperative travel. Also excluded is travel necessary for tactical deployment of U.S. forces, reduction of U.S. employment overseas, or travel financed from available foreign currencies.

The directive orders the maximum use of military aircraft or aircraft

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Marines Seek 4,000 in April Draft Call

The Department of Defense April draft call for 48,000 inductees includes 4,000 men for the Marine Corps, the first time since March 1966 the Marines have requested draftees.

According to DOD officials, the Marine Corps request is a result of the need to replace an estimated 19,000 men inducted into the Marines in late 1965 and early 1966 during an accelerated buildup of Marine personnel at that time.

Defense Department officials said a majority of the 19,000 personnel inducted into the Marine Corps at that time are being or have been lost to release from active duty. Most of the replacement personnel are being obtained through a stepped-up recruitment program which is expected to average 8,000 men per month during the first half of 1968.

"The Marine Corps request for 4,000 inductees represents the residual number of new entrants needed, which cannot be met through enlistments at currently anticipated recruitment levels."

In addition to the April draft call, the largest in 17 months, the Army has requested an additional 2,000 men in the March draft call, raising the total from 39,000 to 41,000 for that month. Defense officials said the March increase is not expected to raise the 1968 calendar year total above the 302,000 level set earlier this year. The April draft call is the largest since October 1966, when 49,200 men were called into the Army.

AIR FORCE OFFERS 'POSTURE' TESTIMONY

Secretary of the Air Force Harold Brown told the Senate Armed Services Committee the United States has kept well ahead in forces needed for deterrence, and no aggressor could hope to gain any advantage by initiating strategic war.

Secretary Brown

As for the superiority of this country's strategic forces, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. McConnell told the committee, "we are placing emphasis on improvements to our forces for strategic offense and defense, both now and in the future."

On the subject of "Maintaining Strategic Security," Secretary Brown noted, "We developed effective bomber forces earlier than the Soviets, and we retain a measurable advantage in that area. We deployed the Minuteman and Polaris solid-fuel missiles long before the Soviets developed this type of advanced missile system. And we believe that we are remaining ahead in missile technology.

"There is some difficulty in predicting far in advance just what forces will be necessary to deter an aggressor under a variety of possible future conditions. There is also the inherent (although low) risk that a fanatical national leader might initiate a surprising nuclear attack, even in the face of certain and overwhelming destruction of his own nation. Given these uncertainties, we strive to maintain a capability that will appear visibly unassailable to a rational man, but that will also permit us, if reason and deterrence should fail, to use these forces, to the extent feasible, to neutralize opposing weapons and limit damage to ourselves and our allies.

"It should be understood that in the face of an all-out, massive, sophisticated nuclear attack on our cities by a well-designed force, whose evolution responds to our attempts at damage-limiting, we do not have—nor does it appear feasible to have—a damage-limiting capability which could preserve the U.S. as a modern industrial society.

"Having said this, it should be added that deterring nuclear war is a problem of influencing others. It is a highly dynamic process. If a hostile nuclear power improves its offensive weapons, we must make sure its leaders are aware that our retaliatory forces can nevertheless withstand a surprise attack and execute the necessary counterstrikes. In maintaining deterrence, the relative damage expected by each side could have substantial importance. And even in the event of nuclear war, the situation could evolve so that the remaining military strength and assured destruction capability would influence the nature of the war termination, the over-all damage to the U.S., and the nature of events after the war."

Gen. McConnell told the committee that within the tactical area, "we have seen rapid improvement and expansion of airlift, reconnaissance and tactical fighter/attack forces. These improvements have contributed to the increased effectiveness of the air-ground effort which has reduced the capability of the Communist forces in Southeast Asia to conduct successful large-scale offensive operations. It was the high state of readiness of these tactical forces that enabled us in late January 1968 to carry out swiftly the fighter aircraft deployments to South Korea. Through these deployments we were able to increase substantially in a matter of hours the range of choices available to our country for dealing with acts of renewed Communist aggression in that part of the world.

"Through our intensive evaluation of the results obtained in combat by our people, weapons and tactics, we are alert to further opportunities for achieving accelerated response and greater accuracy in delivering all gradations of firepower. Along with the improvements that we are seeking at the strategic level, we are also recommending for our general purposes forces a number of measures that we consider essential to improve our capabilities for limited war and counter-insurgency.

Gen. McConnell

"It is our conviction that, by employing strategic and tactical forces as complementary elements of military power, we can hope to increase their total deterrent effect. Through this approach we can improve our prospects for depressing still further the levels of violence which an aggressor can resort to with any hope of success."

Gen. McConnell then talked of the threat posed to U.S. security by Communist power and noted that the Communist drive for more power is increasing across the entire spectrum of conflict. . . . Support for what Communists call "wars of liberation" continues to be an essential element of their doctrine and over-all strategy.

"In developing our own plans for future Air Force capabilities," Gen. McConnell said, "we have sought to take a realistic estimate of the threat —as well as other relevant considerations—into account. The forces which we are proposing are designed as part of a national military establishment which will maintain U.S. strategic superiority and thus deter nuclear war, and at the same time provide a capability to effectively counter threats at the lower levels of conflict."

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DOD Changes Regulations On Special Combat Leave

Regulations governing special 30-day leaves for personnel who extend for six months beyond the normal 12-month Vietnam tour of duty have been expanded to include personnel assigned to other parts of Southeast Asia and actively engaged in combat operations.

Under DOD Directive 1327.3, personnel eligible for the special 30-day leave must "be permanently assigned to a military unit stationed in Vietnam or permanently assigned on a 12-month Southeast Asia unaccompanied tour and regularly engaged in operations in a hostile fire area."

Department of Defense officials said the revision is aimed primarily at Air Force personnel stationed in Thailand who are taking part in day-to-day strikes over North and South Vietnam.

Travel Reduction

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under DOD contract in traveling overseas with a greater use of "less than first class travel on vessels and aircraft" where military aircraft or other military carriers are not available.

Delays en route, on a leave of absence basis, will be authorized under the new directive only in emergency situations, including illness or other medical problems requiring immediate attention and unusual circumstances when approved by the head of the DOD component concerned.

The directive also orders a maximum reduction in DOD sponsored tours, "authorizing only those which are necessary to the orderly process of essential DOD business or for maintaining morale of U.S. forces stationed overseas."

Military departments and DOD agencies are ordered to "take the necessary action to apply the guidelines and criteria set forth in this directive to DOD contractor personnel traveling overseas on defense business and personnel traveling overseas under grants from DOD to the extent possible and feasible."

Secretary Rusk Comments on Status Of Vietnam Negotiation Proposals

Secretary of State Dean Rusk released a statement Feb. 14 in reply to questions asked about the connection between the possibility of negotiations for a peaceful settlement in Vietnam and the military operations now in progress.

"It should be obvious," the secretary said, "that there is a connection since both are involved in moving from hostilities to peace."

Secretary Rusk's statement continued:

Hanoi has repeatedly refused to take steps to reduce the scale of violence in Southeast Asia. They have refused to respect the territorial integrity and neutrality of Cambodia, despite intensive international effort to respond to Cambodia's own wishes in the matter.

Hanoi has repeatedly rejected any efforts to bring about a full compliance by all parties with the Geneva Accords of 1962 on Laos. Today their forces are increasing their operations in Laos itself and are stepping up their illegal infiltration through Laos into South Vietnam.

Hanoi has treated with contempt the demilitarized character of the Demilitarized Zone between North and South Vietnam and has rejected all efforts to restore the demilitarization of that area.

Bombing Halts Not Productive

Repeated periods of bombing cessation or reduction in North Vietnam have elicited no corresponding action by North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam. Quite the contrary, such periods have been used to build up their military forces in South Vietnam. Cease-fire periods have been marked by hundreds of cynical violations by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces—and on a massive scale during the recent Tet holidays.

At no time has Hanoi indicated publicly or privately that it will refrain from taking military advantage of any cessation of the bombing of North Vietnam. Nor has it shown any interest in preliminary discussions to arrange a general cease-fire.

In recent weeks Hanoi knew that discussions of a peaceful settlement were being seriously explored; they also knew that there was a reduction of bombing attacks on North Vietnam, specifically in the Hanoi and Haiphong areas during these explorations. Their reply was a major offensive through South Vietnam to bring the war to the civilian population in most of the cities of that country. Their preparations for a major offensive in the northern provinces of South Vietnam continue unabated.

Peace Explorations Rejected

In assessing, therefore, whether Hanoi's alleged interest in political talks has anything to do with making peace, one must take into full account the negative meaning of their recent escalation. The President declared in his State of the Union Message that he would continue to explore the possibilities of negotiation and would report the results. I must report that all explorations to date have resulted in a rejection of his San Antonio formula.

All of the proposals made by the United States for peace in Southeast Asia continue to be valid; specifically, the San Antonio formula put forward by President Johnson in September remains the basis of our position.

We are not interested in propaganda gestures whose purpose is to mislead and confuse; we will be interested in a serious move toward peace when Hanoi comes to the conclusion that it is ready to move in that direction. Hanoi knows how to get in touch with us.

Defense R&D Budget Request Designed To Meet Known, Possible Security Threats

The Department of Defense has requested congressional approval for a $8.03 billion research and development budget designed to meet "known and possible threats" to national security.

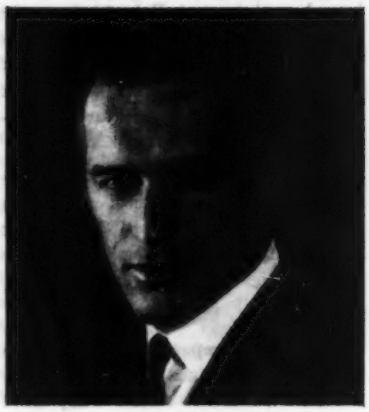
Dr. John S. Foster Jr., Director of Defense Research and Engineering, told the Senate Armed Services Committe during testimony on the fiscal 1969 DOD proposal that "to manage defense R&D we must examine any shifts in actual and potential threats to national security. The purpose of each R&D effort must be measured explicitly in terms of improvements to our current capabilities to meet known or possible threats."

A "central component" in the defense R&D management philosophy is the question of "potential threats" —the surprise factor in any possible and real research and development advances by the Soviet Union and/or Red China.

"A veil masks many details of their defense planning. This produces uncertainty in our estimates of their current and likely future forces, and even more uncertainty about the pace and goals of their advanced research. This demands that we carry out an aggressive R&D program to guard against surprises."

Because of this mask of secrecy, the U.S. must develop, "and in some cases" even deploy, systems to assure a margin of strategic security, a strategy which the Defense Department plans to continue.

For this reason, Dr. Foster said, DOD's research and technology base must be protected carefully and "must not be permitted to erode. There is no 'technical plateau' now, nor is one about to be created. But . . . we are convinced that our research and exploratory development requires increased support during the next few years to ensure many options—a margin of safety—against any technological challenge."



Dr. Foster

A most important question, therefore, is whether the U.S. is correctly interpreting Soviet intent in their strategic programs. "Are they striving for a deterrent capability—or are they trying to achieve what would amount to first-strike, damage-limiting, strategic superiority?

"If we had a complete, valid answer to this question, we would pace our R&D efforts accordingly."

Soviet forces currently under development provide some significant clues as to their intent, but even these current clues are described as "ambiguous and inconclusive." This ambiguity exists, Dr. Foster said, because weapons developed by the Soviets provide not only a "secure second capability" but also can be used for first strike.

"The Fractional Orbit Bombardment Systems (FOBS) can be explained as an attempt at a 'cheap shot' at our bomber bases, attempting to avoid our existing ICBM warning. We already are countering their effort by installing new over-the-horizon radars to provide adequate warning for our alert bombers."

The U.S. must continue to be alert "because the Soviets seem to search continually for potential weak spots in our systems. They may develop weapons for a first strike role, eve if the advantage were patently tem porary."

There is little question that th U.S. faces a growing threat in Vie nam. A serious heavy ordnanc threat has developed through the i crease of infiltration of weapons ma ufactured by the Soviet Union, D Foster said.

"For example, 122mm and 140m rockets and shaped charge anti-tan weapons are more damaging and le detectable by our present equipmen Near the Demilitarized Zone, the a tillery and rockets cause considerab harassment of U.S. and SVN insta lations.

"Increased effectiveness of NV anti-air systems (which involve im provements in combined SAM-MI tactics) indicate greater potential a attrition in the future. This is a ver serious trend. We will have to wor harder to maintain our presently lo loss rate. In light of the Soviet an nouncement of its intention to suppl NVN with additional military weap ons, we must be prepared to counte additional threats."

The U.S. is currently revealin many of its non-nuclear capabilitie in Southeast Asia, a move which i necessary but is described by D Foster as a "significant shift f threat" during the past year.

"Literally hundreds of advance components and systems are bein 'tested' in combat—electronic counte measures, bomblet warheads, comm nications gear, and new ordnanc These new equipments . . . are con tributing to solving the problems i Vietnam. Nevertheless, while th operational experience helps us pla future R&D, it also means we los a margin of technological surprise.

"Assessed along with the highl significant, estimated 10 percen growth in Soviet spending during th past year for military and spac sciences, this 'disclosure' places ne urgency on our entire R&D program.

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